

CHILDREN'S NEWSPAPER

EVERY TUESDAY

FOUNDED BY ARTHUR MEE

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

December 28,
1946
No 1449

PRICE THREEPENCE

ELKS IN HARNESS

Will They Appear on Next Year's Christmas Cards?

A Moscow scientist, reports *The Times*, has now schooled elks to haul sledges, and, like good horses, to answer to the rein. And it may well be that in the realm of Christmas fancy we shall soon be hearing of Santa Claus driving his team of elks, instead of the reindeer which usually draw his Christmas luggage and make happy landings among the chimney pots.

It would seem that speed-limits mean nothing to these far-striding giants, one elk having been timed to trot at 40 miles an hour. Elk-hunters, indeed, have long said that these animals, biggest of all the deer—biggest, too, of all European animals—outstrip the fleetest horse. That, however, was not in harness, but during a chase through dense woods that elks haunt, or across marshy land.

The Handsome Bull

Santa Claus will hardly be able to yoke them with his reindeer, which, only four feet high at the shoulder, are sturdy travellers, but not so speedy. Elks, mounted on stilt-like legs, reach a height of six feet at the shoulder, and waste nothing of their natural advantages in covering the ground. Short-necked, with long, narrow heads and unlovely fleshy muzzles, the bulls carry immense spreading antlers, weighing as much as 60 pounds; the female elk, unlike the female reindeer, has no antlers. The bull elks shed theirs in mid-winter—not too early to look handsome for such Christmas duties as Santa Claus might summon them.

Like reindeer, elks range far in north-eastern Europe, and right away through Siberia; they abound also in Canada and the Northern parts of the United States, though in the New World the elk is known as the moose.

What Moscow has done with the elk, other northern peoples may wish to imitate, and, with the notion spreading, it would not be surprising to find this newest animal introduction to domestic service figuring on next year's Christmas cards as Santa Claus's Elk Express.

As a matter of fact, there is already an untapped menagerie of animals from which Father Christmas might select fresh teams. Disciplined elephants, buffaloes, oxen, camels, llamas, yaks, sheep, goats, dogs, and asses, all serve somewhere in the role of the horse. Ostriches have run races in trotting sulks, and even pigs have been harnessed to carts by freakish owners. But the efforts of such allies would scarcely keep time and tune with the silent service of the reindeer that tradition bids us honour.

Summer Diet

The elk, however, doughty hero of the wilds, is of the elect; he may serve in that team which is, to childish imagination, the best-loved of all. He is an ungainly great fellow, survival from the days of mastodon and woolly rhinoceros; but there is a touch of rugged poetry in his ways, and in summer he gets him to the lakes, there to feast on—water-lilies. Could there be any diet more fitting for a steed destined to employment in realms of enchanting make-believe?



STIG LARSSON'S FIND

Riches From Arabia

PLAYING in a sandpit on his grandfather's farm on the Baltic island of Gotland, four-year-old Stig Larsson found enough silver coins to fill his pockets. He took them home, delighted to have so much to put into his money-box. But, when grown-ups examined them, it was found that the coins were Arabian ones, dating back to the time of the Vikings. A further search was made, and 70 whole coins and many fragments were found.

In Viking times the Swedes living on Gotland used to trade with the countries round the Black Sea and Eastern Mediterranean, the goods reaching the Baltic by way of the rivers of Russia.

The Swedish National Antiquary Office is taking charge of Stig Larsson's treasure, giving him in return present-day Swedish money for his money-box.

Not long ago an even more important find was made on Oland, the second largest Swedish island in the Baltic. Fifty-six gold coins of the fifth century were found about a foot underground. This was "East Roman" money.

A Tale of Treasure Island

WHAT IS THE DEAD MAN'S CHEST?

IT is too much to hope that the present Christmas holidays will have such magic results for literature as sprung from the Christmas cruise of Charles Kingsley to the West Indies. This not only yielded his charming volume, *At Last*, but was the origin of *Treasure Island*, Stevenson's immortal story, which is once again serving the theatre as a Christmas play.

Throughout *Treasure Island* there runs a mysterious chorus, sung by the pirates—we all know it:

*Fifteen men on The Dead Man's Chest—
Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum.*

But like Jim Hawkins in the tale, we imagine that chest to be one resembling the huge sea-chest that accompanied Billy Bones, the old buccaneer, to the Admiral Benbow inn.

Now, although Stevenson does not explain, *The Dead Man's Chest* is really a tiny British islet which, shown as a nameless speck in modern maps, was last named in our Admiralty charts in 1806. It is one of the Virgin Islands, in the West Indies, lying in 64° 30' west longitude and 18° 20' north latitude, between Salt Island and Peter Island.

At Last

Kingsley had dreamed for 40 years of following in the wake of Columbus, Hawkins, Drake, and Raleigh, and during the Christmas of 1869 realised his dream—at last! Steaming among the Virgin Islands, he became familiar with such names as Rum Island, The Dutchman's Cap, Broken Jerusalem, and, strangest of all, *The Dead Man's Chest*. These names, he thought, must be pirate versions of former Spanish titles for these islands.

In the case of *The Dead Man's Chest*, however, he was wrong.

As Sir Algernon Aspinall has shown in his book on the West Indies, the rocky islet that Stevenson has immortalised suggested to the followers of Columbus the outline of a table with a coffin on it. So they named it *El Casa di Muerte*—*The Dead Man's Chest*.

A Negro Chorus

When Stevenson read Kingsley's book his imagination took fire at the name of this island, and, writing afterwards to Sir Sidney Colvin, he said, "*Treasure Island* came out of Kingsley's *At Last*, where I got *The Dead Man's Chest*—that was the seed." Many other seeds collected by him in that book grow in *Treasure Island*. Here are the fevers and the earth-tremors that Billy Bones describes; here are Kingsley's sailors eagerly gathering strange shells, like those so surprisingly found in the chest of the old pirate, with his new clothes and old money, and his map of the secret island. In *At Last*, too, Stevenson found a Negro chorus "*Yah-he-ho-o-hu*," which, in *Treasure Island*, becomes the buccaneers' "*Yo-ho-ho!*"

All of which shows that had not Kingsley made that Christmas cruise which so enriched his own pages, Robert Louis Stevenson—perish the thought—might never have written *Treasure Island*, called, when it first appeared serially in a paper for young people, *The Sea Cook*.



Boys and girls of Almondbank, Perthshire, bring out their toboggans to make the most of a fall of snow

FINDING THE WAY TO PEACE IN EUROPE

The Problem of Franco Spain

THE peace treaties with Germany's former allies Italy, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Finland have been agreed to by the Council of Foreign Ministers and will very soon be duly signed, and ratified by all the nations concerned.

At peace with the Allies, these five nations will be free to take their full part again in world affairs and in due course be accepted as members of the United Nations.

They may even be accepted by that body before another European nation, Spain, future relations with which have been discussed with an intensity of feeling this month in the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York.

It is the existing Spanish Government of General Franco that is hated by the United Nations, who have already condemned it many times.

The British Government has stated that it "detested" the Franco Government, while the US Government has expressed its desire to see Franco removed.

Unfriendly Acts

Why is Franco's Government "detested"? The answer is: Mainly because it has features which we so intensely disliked and fought against in the Italian Fascist and German Nazi regimes. And secondly because, after a long civil war, the Franco Government imposed itself on Spain in 1938 with the active help of Hitler and Mussolini.

Since then the sins of the Franco regime against the United Nations have been many. During the war Franco supported Germany and Italy as far as he could, and though declaring himself "non-belligerent" actually sent 47,000 men and an air

squadron to fight the Russians on the Eastern Front.

Taking this record into account, it is not surprising to find that the United Nations have condemned the Spanish Government. It has been agreed that Spain should not be permitted to become a member of the United Nations or any organisation connected with it as long as Franco rules. But there arises the question of how to get rid of the Franco Government. And it is here that there are differences of opinion.

The Belgian representative at New York proposed that all members of the United Nations should break off diplomatic and trade relations with Spain; and that if within a reasonable time the Franco Government is not ended the Security Council should consider adequate measures to remedy the situation. America and Britain say, however, that nothing should be done that could lead to the shedding of blood again, and Senator Connally strongly opposed any policy of interference in the affairs of one of the small nations.

Whatever views they may hold about General Franco and his Government, it is questionable if proud Spaniards would like to accept any foreign-sponsored Government in Madrid.

As Sir Hartley Shawcross, the British representative, wisely said: Ultimately the Spanish people must work out their own salvation.

Mr Pip Comes to Town

GREAT EXPECTATIONS, the film now showing at the Gaumont Picture House in the Haymarket, London, is made from the novel of that name by Charles Dickens, and should interest many of our readers if only for the part played in it by a clever boy actor.

It tells the story of a young blacksmith's apprentice known as Pip, who is left a fortune by a mysterious benefactor.

To Pip it seems like a fairy tale, and he believes his fairy godmother to be an eccentric old lady who has taken a fancy to him and invites him to her house.

Pip leaves his simple home and goes to London to be turned into a young gentleman of fashion, and has a wonderful time; but it is not until he comes of age that he learns the identity of the person who has made it all possible. The days that follow are filled with surprises and adventures which hold our attention right through to the end.

This is an excellent picture, admirably filmed and ably produced; yet, good as it is, it should be clearly stated that there are one or two moments in it which make it unsuitable for very young or highly imaginative children. The characters are living in days very different from our own, and occasional incidents

BE WISE—

—and place an order with a newsagent for your CN.

It is the certain way of ensuring a copy regularly each week.

flashed on the screen are not for the eyes of little people.

The story is played with distinction by a team of first-rate artists, which includes John Mills, Francis L. Sullivan, Ivor Barnard, Bernard Miles, Valerie Hobson, Jean Simmons, and Martita Hunt; while young Anthony Wager gives such a delightful performance as Pip as a boy that we find ourselves wishing he need never grow up.

THE PIGEON IN THE BEAM

A PIGEON that was trained in the war to fly along a searchlight beam was on parade at the Victory Show of Racing Pigeons held in London recently.

His name is Searchlight Pied, and he worked with the French Resistance Movement. He had been trained to overcome his homing instinct and to carry important messages guided by searchlight. A plane released him within range of the searchlight and he flew the rest of the way along its beam, avoiding decoy beams.

Another war veteran pigeon, who also worked for the French Resistance, was All Alone, aged seven. He carried out the longest flight in the history of the Service, over 480 miles from Vienne in France to his base in England. All Alone won the Dickin Medal.

WORLD NEWS REEL

HOT NEWS. China is again sending preserved ginger to Britain.

The Big Brother Movement is planning to restart next year its scheme for Youth Emigration to Australia.

The British authorities in Vienna have been giving special assistance in the reconstruction of St Stephen's Cathedral.

A striking red marble statue of Lenin has just been unveiled in Kiev, capital of the Ukraine.

RETURN VISIT. Lord Inverchapel, British Ambassador to the U.S., who, as told in the CN, spent a weekend on an Iowa farm, has invited his host and family to spend Christmas with him.

In Lisbon a big cinema to show British films is being built by Mr J. Arthur Rank's organisation.

Mrs Eleanor Roosevelt, widow of the President, has adopted a fifth child, the daughter of a Frenchman killed with the Resistance Movement.

Holland is to send a limited number of emigrants to Australia in 1947, and the Holland-Australia shipping line hopes to be able to take about 50 a month.

HOME NEWS REEL

CHRISTMAS TREAT. St Pancras Arts and Civic Council are presenting Treasure Island at the Town Hall in the Euston Road every morning at 10.45, except Sundays, beginning on Boxing Day.

The Southern Railway will have 36 new luxury coaches on the Atlantic Coast Express next summer, incorporating suggestions from 25,000 passengers.

Beatrix Potter's drawings for her book, *The Tailor of Gloucester*, have been presented to the Tate Gallery.

THREE TREES. An oak felled near Hitchin, Herts, to provide timber for the LNER wagon works, was between 800 and 900 years old. At Malpas, Monmouthshire, an oak mentioned in Domesday Book is to be saved from decay by tree surgery. At Bath a 60-foot tree was felled to rescue a kitten.

A Neolithic Age flint axe, 4000 years old, has been found by Mr S. W. Coulson while ploughing at March, Cambridgeshire.

Gainsborough Pictures propose next year to produce the story of Christopher Columbus in Technicolor.

The National Federation of Free Church Councils is to appoint representatives to meet delegates from the Church of England to discuss the question of church union.

YOUTH NEWS REEL

CHIEF SEA SCOUT. Rear-Admiral Viscount Mountbatten of Burma has accepted the position of Commodore of Sea Scouts.

Recently the Lord-Lieutenant of Pembroke presented the Scout Gilt Cross to 12-year-old Patrol Leader Peter Collins, of the 3rd Pembroke Dock Sea Scout Troop, for his gallantry in attempting to rescue a child from a static water tank.

At Morden, Surrey, Scouts are busy rehearsing for a Gang Show, the proceeds of which are to help to pay the expenses of

BILL OF HEALTH. Starting in the New Year, every baby born in France will be issued with a health identity card which will be kept up to date by free medical examination.

The UN Security Council recently considered a complaint of Greece that Albania, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria were supporting the guerrillas who have been fighting Government forces in northern Greece.

At Thanbyuzayat, in Burma, a ceremony has been held in memory of the 13,500 British, Australian, and Dutch prisoners-of-war who died while building the Burma-Siam railway for the Japanese.

About 6000 British troops are now with the occupation forces in Japan.

AN OLD CAMPAIGNER. The veteran French Socialist leader, M. Léon Blum, aged 74, was recently elected Prime Minister of France by the National Assembly by 575 votes out of 583—a nearly unanimous vote.

The population of France has decreased by 1,400,000 since 1936. It was then 41,900,000. It is now, according to the census of last March, 40,500,000.

Mr Mackeggie of Foxton, Cambridgeshire, has built his own 12-h p car from spare parts and iron sheeting. It took six months to make and cost him £125.

SILENT SONGSTERS. At the British Roller Canary Club's annual singing contest at Croydon, not long ago, two of the 276 birds refused to sing. For an hour judges waited in vain for a song.

The Vicar of St Giles's Church, Camberwell, London, recently received £5, under a bequest which is 100 years old, for preaching a sermon against cruelty to animals. His churchwarden received £1 for advertising it. Both gave the money to the church restoration fund.

Essex policemen are to have raincoats instead of overcoats so that they can run faster to catch criminals.

SOMETHING MISSING. A Norbury schoolboy wrote in his essay recently: This is a lovely school. All our teachers are certified.

At Portwrinkle in Cornwall the villagers recently recovered 200 bales of rubber, each weighing two hundredweight, which came from a ship torpedoed in 1943.

The Bishop of London's appeal for the fund to rebuild London's churches has now raised over £155,000.

local Scouts who are going to the Sixth World Jamboree in France next year.

TARGET. A Guide Development Fund has been started which aims at raising by voluntary means a sum equal to one shilling a head for every member of the Movement, each year for the next three years. There are nearly a quarter of a million Guides in England alone.

Guide camps held in Britain this year have been attended by 63,433 members of the Guide Movement.

Holiday Lectures For Boys and Girls

THERE are several very interesting lectures for young people being given in London during these holidays, apart from those arranged by the LCC at various technical institutes.

At the Royal Institution there is to be a fascinating series, beginning on Boxing Day, by Professor Hartridge, on Colours and How We See Them. (All the seats for these lectures are sold.)

At the Royal Institute of British Architects, 66 Portland Place, W1, Mr G. A. Jellicoe, a member of the Town Planning Institute, is giving three illustrated lectures on Architecture: What it Means (How it Affects You at home, at School, at Play). The dates are December 30, January 1, and January 3; the

hour, 3 p.m. Tickets for them, which are free, can be obtained from the Secretary, RIBA, 66 Portland Place, W1.

The two Dr Mann Juvenile Lectures at the Royal Society of Arts, John Adam Street, Adelphi, which are to be given on January 1 and January 3, at 2.30 p.m., are only open to children of Fellows of the Society, owing to the limited accommodation in the building which was damaged in the war. The first lecture is by Uncle Mac, of the BBC, who will speak on Children's Hour, and illustrate his talk by recordings and demonstrations. The second lecture, given by Dr J. H. Partridge, is *The Story of Glass*, which will be illustrated by a film and demonstrations.

BOOKS AS WAR CASUALTIES

THE Inter-Allied Book Centre, which is connected with the Library Association, has done a magnificent work in collecting and distributing about one million books to replace those lost by war damage.

The British Museum Library alone lost 150,000 books during the blitz and has received about 24,000 books from the Centre, which has also despatched about 100,000 books to other libraries in Britain. Altogether about

650,000 have been sent for the restoration of libraries here and in overseas countries. The Centre also provided several million books for the Services.

Although this splendid organisation is due to be closed down shortly, it is hoped that its work will be taken over by Unesco, so that it may become a permanent feature of the cultural life of Britain and the many countries associated with her during the war.

Fighting Famine By Air

FAMINE-STRICKEN people of the Dacca and Chittagong areas of India are being supplied with food flown to them by R.A.F. aircraft operating between Calcutta and Madras. In response to an urgent request from Sir Frederick Burrows, Governor of Bengal, Service and other aircraft have been switched over to the task. In consequence the airline operating between Calcutta and Madras has been restricted during the operations.

In August of this year a similar operation was carried out by aircraft of India Command.

Remote garrisons in India are also supplied by air. More than

300 tons of supplies are being dropped by India Command aircraft to eleven units of the Assam Rifles, who garrison remote outposts of the North-East Frontier. These units, which lie on the borders of Tibet and China, are completely cut off from the rest of the world. Six months' supplies are dropped to the garrison at one operation. Air supply has eliminated the use of nearly 3000 coolies, who take six months to do the job, when each carries a 60-lb pack of food. Bad weather, however, is still a difficulty in Assam, and generally it deteriorates in December, making flying operations hazardous.

20,000 MILES BY CANOE

MAJOR R. RAVEN-HART, a British author, has recently completed a trip of 1100 miles down the Murray River in Australia in a 17-foot collapsible canoe. He was accompanied on his journey by B. L. Hebbard, of Mildura, Victoria.

Previous to this Major Raven-Hart had travelled nearly 19,000 miles in his canoe on river expeditions in many foreign countries.

Jane Austen's Cottage

IN the Hampshire village of Chawton, a mile or two from Alton, is a little red house where Jane Austen lived from 1809 until her death in 1817, and wrote most of her novels.

The Jane Austen Society, formed in 1940, has now appealed for funds to secure this cottage, and to make the rooms particularly associated with the novelist available to the public.

Like the Brontë Sisters, Jane Austen was the daughter of a country parson, and though her world was just her village, she understood life and people. Her characters lived, and still live. It was Sir Walter Scott who wrote of her: "That young lady had a talent . . . which is, to me, the most wonderful I ever met with."

Round the Museums

THE TRICYCLE

TRAVELLING on this century-old tricycle must have been a painful process for the rider, for the tyres were solid. It was



rather dangerous, too, as it had no brakes, and the method of stopping was to bear heavily on the handles and gradually slow down. It was steered by foot with the aid of stirrups and propelled with the hands, and as there was no free-wheel mechanism, when he wanted a rest the rider had to stop. The tricycle is in the Bury St Edmunds Museum.

The Sunshine Homes

THE recent annual report of the National Institute for the Blind shows how at their Sunshine Homes and Nursery Schools there are blind children as happy, active, full of fun, and as attractive as any children blessed with sight.

The children at the Northwood Home were thrilled when taken to the seaside for a holiday, and one little blind boy said as they set out that he was glad it was raining "because it will fill up the sea before we get there."

Those in charge of these blind young people exert patient, untiring perseverance in helping them to live happy, useful lives in spite of the tragic handicap of blindness—a labour of love indeed.

MIXED GRILL

THE recent introduction of whale-meat at a public luncheon in London, of which the C.N. has already written, would have delighted Frank Buckland, the famous naturalist, and the members of the Acclimatisation Society that he formed to increase the number of species of birds and animals that could live here and so supplement our native resources.

Frank and his illustrious father, Dr Buckland, Dean of Westminster Abbey, tested every form of food that came their way—crocodile and viper, hedgehog and frog, potted ostrich and elephant trunk, as well as steaks from a mammoth that had laid for more than 100,000 years in the frozen soil of Siberia.

The first banquet of the Acclimatisation Society provided soups made from swallows' nests, sea-snails, and the sinews of Chinese deer. The guests had kangaroo steak, Chinese lamb roasted whole, Syrian pig, Canadian goose, curassow, and Honduras turkey, herrings from Nova Scotia, and the dried roes of red mullet caught off the Ionian Islands. Perhaps the novelty most appreciated was dried bananas, a fruit then new to this country. Whatever the aid to acclimatisation, the dinner was voted a huge success, though some of the diners did confess to some qualms.

FILMING A HYMN

A METHODIST minister, the Revd H. J. Garland, of Millom, West Cumberland, who has written two books on Henry Lyte, composer of Abide With Me, is to direct a film dealing with the story behind the writing of the famous hymn.



"SALUTE THE HAPPY MORN"

For Young Stamp Collectors

AT the British Philatelic Exhibition, announced in the December 14 issue of the C.N., there is to be a competition for stamp collectors under 16. A trophy will be given for the best-arranged collection in one volume, and there will be prizes of Savings Certificates and sets of mint Colonial Peace Issue stamps.

The volumes must be handed into the stand of the British Philatelic Association, Ltd. at the Exhibition, which is being held at the Imperial Institute, South Kensington, from December 28 until January 4.

The Exhibition will be open on weekdays from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. (9.30 p.m. on Saturdays). Admission will be 1s 6d for adults and 6d for boys and girls under 14.

The All-Glass Plane

THE old proverb tells us that people who live in glass houses should not throw stones, but travellers in the glass plane of the future will be able to throw as hard as they like. A glass aircraft fuselage made in America has already flown several hundred miles and has proved to be half as strong again as an ordinary metal fuselage. Experiments have now been carried out with a new type of wing made of a mixture of fibre glass and resin. This new wing has withstood all the official strength tests of the U.S. Army Air Force, and is now to be attached to the glass fuselage, making the first all-glass aircraft in the world.

The main advantages of this type of plane are the smooth finish that is obtained, and the fact that, as the whole aircraft is moulded, rivets are not used—thereby eliminating a lot of the "drag" which considerably reduces a plane's speed.

TALE OF A TUB

LIKE Britain, America has an acute housing shortage. A resourceful North Dakota man, Ardell Hagan, after waiting a year for a house in vain, began to search for anything that would accommodate himself, his wife, and baby. Eventually he found a 20-foot-high barrel, beside a road, which had been left there by a man who, before he went bankrupt, had used it as a lemonade stall. Hagan had the barrel moved to a suitable position, and now it is a comfortable home with hot and cold running water, a sink, a telephone, a built-in bed, a baby's cot, couch, table, and wireless.

BARGAIN-HUNTING IN NEW GUINEA

EXTRAORDINARY scenes were witnessed at Lae, New Guinea, during a gathering of the Commonwealth Disposals Commission, offering surplus Government stock for sale. The chiefs and their numerous retainers came with full purses, eager to buy up such things as engines to irrigate their farms, and car batteries to keep their lorries running. Articles of attire, the more spectacular the better, quickly found a sale, and many hundreds of natives went on their long home trek proudly wearing a mixed display of costumes.

DISCOVERED BY ACCIDENT

THE gay and glittering form of tinsel with which we decorate our Christmas trees and dress the fairy dolls, was discovered by accident in a silk mill in south-east London. The inventor, William Henry Harris, of whom it can be said, "he put the sparkle into Christmas," lived to be 102, dying just before war broke out in 1939.

The silk mills in which he worked made gold and silver braid for uniforms. Tidying up

THE LOG ON THE FIRE

NECESSITY has compelled us to eke out our coal ration with a fuel which our ancestors used almost exclusively.

Wood was the winter fuel of old. A poor man gathering it came in sight of Good King Wenceslas. King Alfred was gazing thoughtfully into a peasant's wood fire when, as the tale goes, he allowed the cakes to burn. Every home, high and low, used to burn big wooden logs, and it was not until the 15th century that coal was systematically mined in England. There is evidence that some coal was mined in England as long ago as the Stone Age, and certainly the Romans mined it here; but only a little, and only near the surface.

So let us warm ourselves, when we can, round the old log fire, just as our forefathers did long ago; the fragrant aroma adds an old-world charm to a modern room—especially at Christmas.

THE ABACUS WINS

IN a contest held recently in Tokyo, a 300-year-old abacus (or counting board) easily beat an electric calculating machine.

The calculating machine cost £200 before the war, but the abacus, which originally cost 1s 8d, won the contest easily. The test covered addition, subtraction, division, and multiplication, and the abacus triumphed in all but the multiplication. Kiyoshi Matsuzaki, of the Japanese Ministry of Communications, plucked at the 162 counters on his board at a terrific speed, and he raced through addition and subtraction far ahead of his rival.

Toys For German Children

TOY animals and railway engines, and other Christmas gifts for children, are being made by R.A.F. men at Wahn in Germany, and will be distributed to local children at a party being held for them. Toys for the children of British airmen stationed in Germany in the new married quarters are also being made.

Flight-Lieutenant W. Anderton, of Number 2 Group Vocational Training Centre, one of the units engaged in toy production, had tools and machinery available in his unit workshops, and instructors and teams of volunteers have set to work in their spare time.

The idea for this small R.A.F. "toy factory" came from the two station Padres, Squadron-Leaders Edwards and Marshall, who suggested that the toys might be provided for five or six hundred children who otherwise would not be visited by Santa Claus this year.

AMERICA AT Games & Their Beginnings

ST PAUL'S A Visit to London Which Lasted 57 Years

THE appealing idea of erecting in St Paul's Cathedral a memorial chapel to the American dead is certain to stir the sympathetic interest of visitors to our country from the United States.

In the great cathedral sleeps one of their illustrious countrymen, Sir Benjamin West, the first important American artist who came to Europe to study, and rose to be President of our Royal Academy.

When Benjamin was born, in 1738, at Springfield, Pennsylvania, America was still a British colony, but she enjoyed nationhood and independence for nearly half a century before he was laid to rest in St Paul's.

War Paint and Art

West's art may be said to have had a truly American inspiration, for Cherokee Red Indians taught him to prepare the colours with which they painted their war weapons. He was sent, a poor youth, by friends to Italy, where he studied for three years, then set out for home. Intending a mere call on England, he reached London in 1763 and stayed 57 years! George the Third, who lost us America, was for 40 years a patron of West, and 28 of his pictures are at Windsor Castle.

Dying in 1820 at the age of 81, West lies in the cathedral crypt near his friend, Sir Joshua Reynolds. At his funeral were 60 splendid coaches, and noblemen, ambassadors, and great artists bore the pall of the once poor American boy who had been for 28 years President of the Royal Academy.

A Parson and His Cow

THE well-known missionaries, Miss Cable, Miss Francesca French, and Miss Eva French, have just completed a tour in Australia and New Zealand on behalf of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Among the visits they will long remember was one to a Queensland minister and his family in a house built on high poles, under which lived the family's cow which the minister milked every morning at dawn.

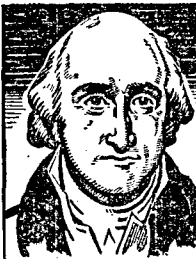
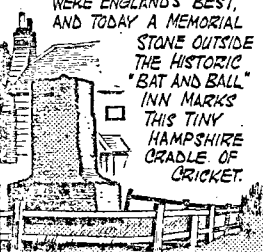
ALTHOUGH CRUDE FORMS OF CRICKET WERE PLAYED IN ENGLAND MORE THAN 500 YEARS AGO, NO RULES WERE DRAWN UP UNTIL 1744.



UNDER THE 1744 RULES WICKETS CONSISTED OF TWO STUMPS, EACH 22 INCHES HIGH. THE BATS WERE SHAPED RATHER LIKE HOCKEY STICKS.

AMONG THE EARLIEST CLUBS WERE SEVENOAKS VINE (Kent), FOUNDED IN 1734 — AND STILL FLOURISHING — AND HAMBLETON (Hampshire).

FOR 40 YEARS HAMBLETON WERE ENGLAND'S BEST, AND TODAY A MEMORIAL STONE OUTSIDE THE HISTORIC "BAT AND BALL" INN MARKS THIS TINY HAMPSHIRE CRADLE OF CRICKET.



AFTER THE DECLINE OF HAMBLETON, THE MARYLEBONE CRICKET CLUB (founded in 1787) ROSE TO PROMINENCE ON A GROUND OWNED BY THOMAS LORD.

THE M.C.C. BECAME CRICKET'S GOVERNING AUTHORITY, WITH LORD'S AS ITS HEADQUARTERS.

ALTOGETHER, THERE HAVE BEEN THREE LORD'S GROUNDS, BUT THE ORIGINAL TURF HAS BEEN TAKEN UP WITH EACH MOVE.



Cricket THEY WHISTLE IN SPANISH

The Goatherds of the Canaries

IN the Canaries is an island where they whistle in Spanish.

The island is Gomera, 12 miles from Tenerife, and the whistling language is used by the goatherds in the mountains to communicate with one another. The vocabulary is small, but the whistled words are single and distinct, and serve a goatherd's simple needs. It is their telegraph.

Dr Rene Verneau, the island's Governor, organised for a recent visitor a test example when the goatherds whistled what they had to say from the high peaks which separated them.

The test began by a call from the chief goatherd, who was with the Governor in his office, to the goatherd on a distant peak telling him to get ready, and by the response from that goatherd asking the Governor not to leave the office.

A Warning Note

The test then continued and was most convincing. Chosen words were whistled, and whistled directions from the Governor's office were complied with directly.

The Governor afterwards explained to the visitor some of the uses to which the goatherds occasionally put their whistling. It was very useful when the Tax Collector was setting out because his approach could be whistled from peak to peak and thus make the collection of the tax a very perplexing business. Also when a serious law case was being heard in the Court Room the windows were shuttered lest a goatherd crouching nearby should hear the proceedings and whistle them to interested goatherds in the mountains.

GREETINGS FROM THE LONELY BISHOP

WHAT is perhaps the most exposed and isolated beacon in the world will be linked by radio with thousands of homes this Christmas.

It is the Bishop Lighthouse—lonely sentinel on the westernmost islet of the Scilly Isles. On Christmas Day, when we are listening to seasonable greetings coming from far and near, we shall hear how the three keepers and their BBC companions on this desolate outpost are spending Christmas.

Not many of us would relish the thought of being shut up in a sea-girt lighthouse on the grey days of winter's wind, rain, and lashing seas. The impres-

sion of imprisonment and utter loneliness amid a wilderness of waters would be enough to last a lifetime, but keepers always say: "You get used to isolation and don't begin to notice it until the relief is overdue."

Every mariner, whose business lies about our coast, knows the Bishop, and scores have thanked God for its kindly gleam on a wild night. The column rises 160 feet, and the warning light can be seen 15 to 20 miles away. Actually, the building is the third to be established on remote Bishop Rock. The engineers in each case were members of the Douglass family, who also erected the neighbouring Wolf and Long-

ships as well as other lighthouses.

The first Bishop was built of cast iron. After three years of hazardous work, all was ready to receive the lantern, but on the night of February 5, 1850, a terrible storm swept away the whole erection.

Cornish granite was used for the next structure. Workmen were kept busy for eight years, and it was in 1858 that the Bishop lit up for the first time. All went well until the storms began to take effect. Vibrations were so great that articles toppled from the shelves whenever a gale sprang up. And so it was decided to build again. The new house took shape around the old one, but reached a greater height. It was completed in 1887, at a cost of nearly £65,000.

Seldom is it calm enough to land on the rock straight from the boat, and the visitor is usually hoisted on to the jetty by rope. "Now then, off you go," says the boatman when, like a pendulum, the visitor, hauled out of the boat, swings away over the boiling surf to the Bishop's towering column.

A Spice of Adventure

How many cloves do you like to push into an apple before you bake it in the oven? Or how often have you tried to cure toothache by using oil of cloves? Have you ever wondered how these delicious spices reach the jars in the shops, or from what part of the world they have been sent?

For many people in Zanzibar, the clove industry is of very great importance, for it is their livelihood.

Exports of clove oil from Zanzibar last year totalled 525,313 lbs. This was a record, and the sales were mainly to the United Kingdom.

The trees grow very tall to form long, majestic avenues, and some, which are sixty or seventy years old, reach a height of over 35 feet.

Bunches of cloves are gathered

just before the apple-green, flushed-pink buds burst into blossom, and are then taken to a drying-ground for separation of the buds and stems. It is from the stems that the oil is distilled.

The buds are measured in a brass container, known as a pishi, and the picker is paid according to the number of pishi he has contributed. Then they are spread out in the open on a concrete floor, and the cloves are dried in four or five days.

They are then poured into sacks, and before they are sent to market government inspectors make sure that the cloves are not below the standard set for moisture and purity. When this test is over they are sold to licensed exporters and graded. They are then weighed and packed for export.

NEW TOWN IN A NEW FOREST

A NEW town of a hundred houses as well as workshops, garages, and a power-station is being built in the centre of 260,000 acres of man-made forest in New Zealand.

This is the town of Kaingaroa and the forest is the Kaingaroa Plains State Forest, which consists of quick-growing pine trees. It covers an area about 20 miles

square on a plain averaging 1800 feet above sea level near the centre of the North Island.

In the hundred houses will live some of the men who will guard the forest against fire and later on make its millions of trees into timber; a landing field for the aircraft which patrol the forest to watch for outbreaks of fire occupies one clearing.

WHO WAS HE?

Picture-Story of a Great Reformer



① "GOODWILL TOWARDS MEN." THAT BELIEF DOMINATED THE LIFE OF THE MAN WHO WAS BORN AT HULL ON AUGUST 24, 1759. WHILE STILL AT SCHOOL (AGED 14) HE WROTE TO A YORKSHIRE PAPER PROTESTING AGAINST THE SLAVE TRADE.

② AT 17 HE WENT TO CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY. IN 1780 HE BECAME M.P. FOR HULL. UNDER AN OAK TREE IN HOLWOOD PARK, KENT, HE DISCUSSED SLAVERY WITH PITT, SOON TO BE PRIME MINISTER.



③ HE WORKED CEASELESSLY ON BEHALF OF THE SLAVES. HE MADE A MAGNIFICENT SPEECH ON THIS SUBJECT IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, WHICH PASSED A BILL FOR THE GRADUAL ABOLITION OF THE TRADE, IN 1804.

④ THIS BILL WAS REJECTED BY THE LORDS, BUT IN 1807 AN ACT WAS PASSED WHICH FORBODE BRITISH SHIPS TAKING PART IN THE SLAVE TRADE. IN 1833 HIS BATTLE FOR THE SLAVES WAS WON — EVERY SLAVE IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE WAS TO BE SET FREE.



⑤ THIS VICTORY WAS ACHIEVED BY THE PASSING OF THE ACT FREEING THE SLAVES — WITHIN A MONTH OF HIS DEATH, WHICH TOOK PLACE ON JULY 29, 1833.

WHO WAS HE?
SEE BACK PAGE

A WONDERFUL NOAH'S ARK NEAR HYDE PARK

The museums of England, many of them closed during the war years, are gradually returning to their original, peaceful roles. One of the most attractive, and important, which have recently opened their doors is the Natural History Museum at South Kensington.

THE kind of young people who read the Children's Newspaper are once again thronging to the Natural History Museum, there to find the things they like best because they are not past understanding. At once they come on the Indian and African elephants, standing back to back as they have stood, immovably, all through the war; and on either side of them are the same welcome examples of wild creatures that change their coats to snowy white when winter comes—the Arctic fox, the ermine, and the weasel.

The Giant Panda is a Kind of Racoon

Here, too, is a newcomer, though a familiar friend, the late lamented Giant Panda from the Zoo, just as he was, with humorous countenance and knowing look, and a label on his glass case with the information that he is not a bear but a kind of racoon.

Farther along in the Round Gallery beyond the Entrance Hall is the old Noah's Ark of familiar beasts and birds, rather more crowded than before



because some of the brighter birds, refugees from the closed Birds' Gallery, are mingled with the bulls and the oxen, the sheep and the goats. It is never simple in one's mind to separate the sheep from the goats here; but on the farther side of the

room are the dogs, an international pack, from the British bulldog to the Tibetan hound, Irish wolfhound, Pekingese, and Toy Pom. All are champions.

A roundabout way leads from here, through the Fish Gallery and the Reptiles, to the Bay of

Whales. In the Fish Gallery is the Basking Shark, one of which inadvertently strayed into a Scottish loch during the war and became a target for rifle practice; and here, too, is a still larger and more ferocious relative, the Whale Shark, which has a mouth as wide as a barn door. In the Reptile Gallery are some wicked alligators and a windowful of snakes, including a python that makes one thankful that it is already stuffed. In an adjoining window are strips of snake-skin so decorative that they might serve as examples in the neighbouring museum to show that Britain Can Make It.

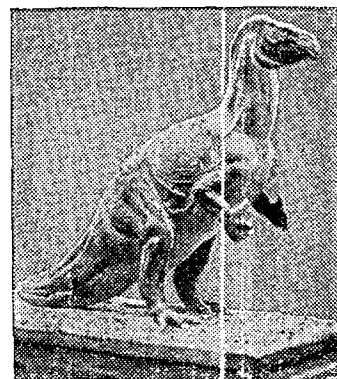
The Biggest Creature That Ever Was

In the Whale Gallery, next door, is the mighty Blue Whale, the biggest creature that ever was, on land or sea, and which at this very moment is being sought by the floating whale factories to supply the oil we so sorely need. There are other whales besides, from the dolphins to the grampus and killer whale, with skeletons and jaws and photographs to tell nearly everything that the whalers know.

Some things the Natural History Museum cannot yet show, because its acres of glass have not yet recovered from the injury caused by enemy bombs. It cannot yet open the gallery of

the Dinosaurs, for instance, but it does its best with small models of the Diplodocus, the Ceratops, and such-like monsters. And though it cannot give us back the extinct Dodo, it does place its skeleton beside a feathered reproduction of the wonder that it was. So also, though it cannot do more than show casts of the skulls of the Java man and the Peking man and the Piltdown British man, it does set out on a shelf a row of their heads as the original men are believed to have been.

It is gratifying, to our national pride to learn that our Piltdown Man may have been the most ancient of all ancient men, and that he walked "the Brighton road" 600,000 years ago.



A model of a dinosaur

South With the Whalers

THIS story is being written for you in the floating factory Balaena, which is now steaming southwards down the Atlantic, bound for Cape Town on her way to the Antarctic.

Balaena is a strange-looking, but very wonderful, ship. She carries a crew of about five hundred, part British, part Norwegian, and we shall do our best to increase your rations next summer with the oil, the meat, meat-extract, dried meat, and liver extract which we shall obtain from the whales.

Let us take a look at her, going from the bow to the stern—a distance of 535 feet.

A Ship That Must Push Its Way Through Ice

The bow is blunt and strongly made, for sometimes these whaling ships have to push their way through blocks of pack-ice. On the fore-deck are the two winches which are used for hoisting the anchors; and immediately aft of them is the hold, down which have passed more provisions than you can imagine or I remember. Down there are stored the salted and frozen meat, the fruit, potatoes, and vegetables, butter and flour, tinned and dried milk, and the tea and coffee to keep us well-fed for months.

Next on our way comes the bridge, from the top of which—50 feet above the sea—the ship is navigated, and where the captain has his quarters. Below this are our mess-rooms and most of the cabins.

Aft of the bridge is a great expanse of deck: if cleared there would be room for four tennis courts. The deck is

divided into "forward plan" and "aft plan" by the amidships house, carrying two enormous steam winches, which are powerful enough to pull the largest whale out of the sea so that it can be cut-up on the deck. There is a kind of tunnel through the amidships house, so that whales can be pulled from the aft to the forward "plan."

If we continue our walk we shall enter another tunnel sloping steeply down to the sea; it is up this slipway that the whales will be dragged aboard. Below the slipway are the engines and boilers; around it the cabins of the engineers and stokers; and above it, just aft of the two funnels, is a hangar with three bright-yellow aircraft in it.

These aeroplanes are Walrus flying-boats, which can be launched into the air by a catapult. When the Walruses return they alight on the water, taxi up to the ship's side, and are lifted aboard by a crane.

Under the main deck is the factory, packed with boilers, tanks, electric motors, and steam-engines, which drive pumps or conveyor belts, while everywhere is a maze of pipes. Everyone gets lost down here on his first visit. Below the factory again are the great tanks, now containing fuel oil, which we hope to fill with 20,000 tons of whale-oil before we come home.

At present there are men working everywhere. On deck there is much splicing of wire; the whale-lines (as thick as your arm) are

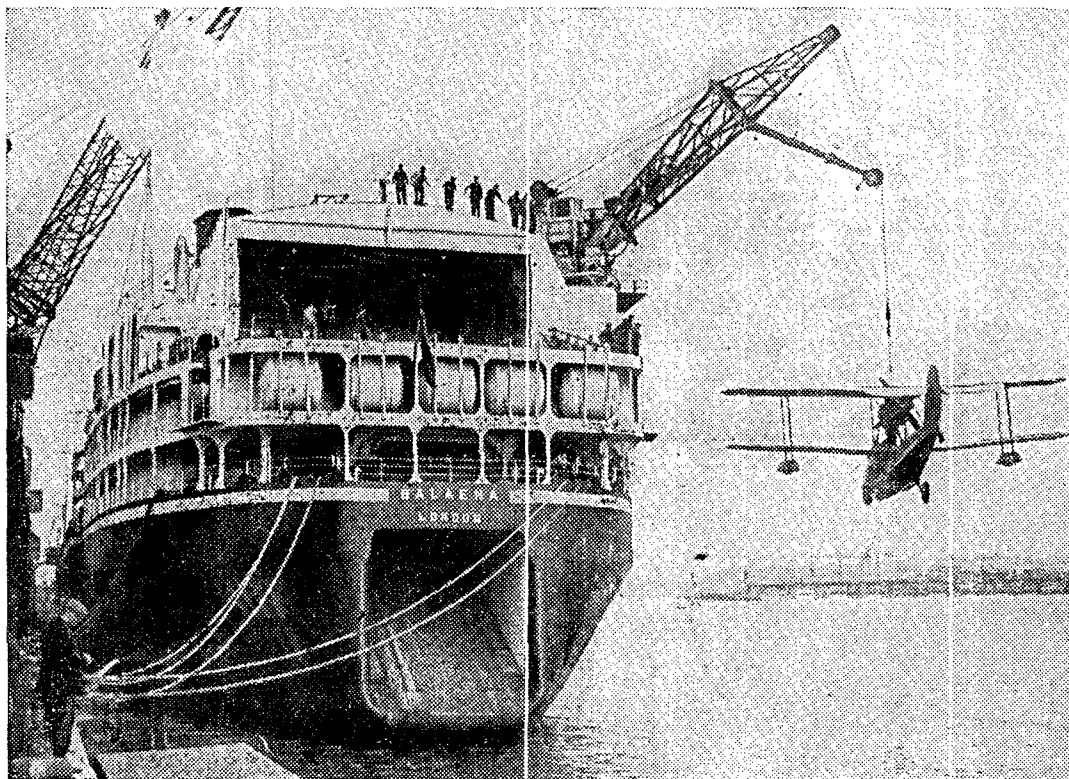
being coiled down; and all sorts of strange tools are being made ready for the start of whaling. There is a blacksmith's forge, a carpenter's and a fitting shop, all equally busy. Two laboratories are being prepared where much chemical research will be carried on, and there are many hundreds of jobs yet to be done in the factory.

When the new 15,000-ton whaling ship, Balaena, set out for the Antarctic we asked one of her scientists to send C N readers some dispatches about the work of the ship. Here is the first of them.

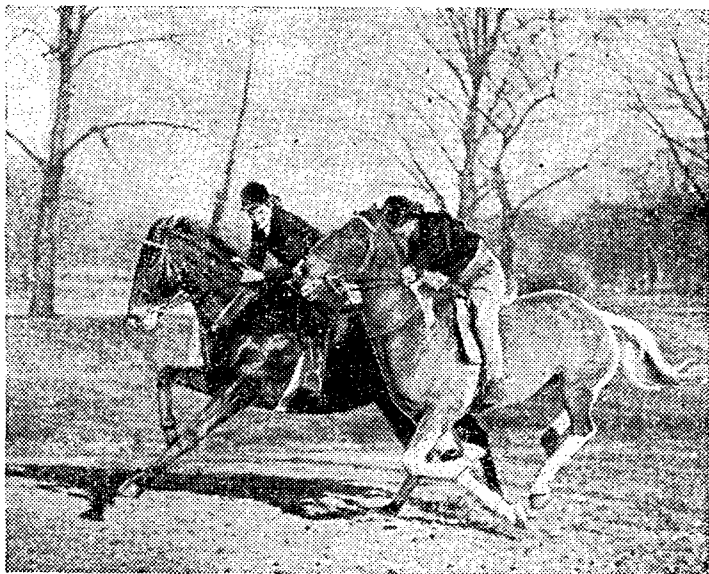
Yesterday we crossed the Equator with traditional ceremony, and soon we shall reach Cape Town and meet our whale-catchers. These are vessels only a little over 100 feet long which will accompany us to the whaling grounds, where they will seek out the whales, pursue, and kill them, finally towing them back to us.

The excitement and beauty of

the ice, the whales, seals, and penguins, the thousands of sea-birds that will be constantly screaming around the Balaena, and the wonderful way in which every part of the whale is turned into something useful, will be described when next I write. That will be from the other side of the Antarctic Circle, I expect. Think of us and wish us luck!



A crane on the Balaena lifts aboard a Walrus flying-boat



A Gallop in the Park

In a rare spell of winter sunshine two London girls enjoy an exhilarating ride along Rotten Row in Hyde Park.

FIRST FIDDLE

THE name of Antonius Stradivarius, who was born 300 years ago and made fiddles in Cremona, the "plain white-aproned man who stood at work patient and accurate full four-score years," is well in the limelight now; he made the violin which Yehudi Menuhin plays when in the film *The Magic Bow* he impersonates behind the scenes the celebrated Paganini.

Paganini had a Stradivarius, and it is the aim of every violinist of fame to perform on one, if it can be acquired. Harvard University has acquired seven and began an inquiry lately to ascertain whether the tone of a Strad is, as every violinist believes, superior to that of the best modern violins. The full report has now been published.

The best makers were invited to send their violins in for comparison, and 100 were contributed. To

these were added a home-made few and some cheap ones, and a selected audience of musical people was invited to hear a distinguished violinist, Heifetz, play them all in turn.

The comparison led to some surprises. Most of the listeners were unable to detect much difference, and seven per cent of them declared that the best modern violins sounded better than the old ones—when Heifetz was playing on them. Evidently it was the player that had most to do with it.

As against these uncertainties, however, something more positive was set. Heifetz played the violins behind a curtain, so that none could see which was which—and then experienced violinists, professional or amateur, had no doubts. They identified the tone of the old Stradivarius without hesitation.

The Signals That Beat the Fog

IT was announced not long ago that the Southern Railway is to spend about £1,200,000 on extending colour-light signalling on certain suburban sections of the main Brighton line. This work of replacing the old-style semaphore signals will take about five years.

The Southern Railway has already the largest mileage of track controlled by colour-light signals in Britain. What radar is to ships in fog so are these colour-light signals to the trains. Their bright beams, often level with the driver's eye, enable him to keep his train moving more quickly and more safely, while in foggy weather the penetrating rays from the signal lenses are visible at a greater distance, enabling the trains to keep going and to move at a higher speed. They mean less work, too, for the signalman. Instead of having to "pull off" the heavy levers which release the semaphore signal arms, he has only to operate from an all-electric signal-box the miniature levers which control the electrical circuits to the colour-light signals and points.

With a few exceptions the colour-light signals have three aspects, and give red, yellow, and green indications. A red light

means that the driver must stop as the section ahead is occupied. He may pass a yellow light but must be prepared to stop at the one beyond. If he sees the green light it means full speed ahead for at least another two sections.

In the new installation on the Southern Railway eleven signal-boxes worked by power will



replace 32 manual signal-boxes and save nearly £20,000 a year.

Colour-light signalling may well be the answer to the great problem of providing more trains.

The Editor's Table

CHRISTMAS WONDER

IN a London street a band at the kerbside is playing Christmas music. The music makes headway against the traffic's roar and passers-by are whistling and humming the tunes. Christmastide has come; the old magic of the matchless story which so stirs the hearts of men is again weaving its spell.

CHRISTMAS is still a great wonder to ordinary human beings. God came to earth as a Babe and started to live an ordinary human life in a little town in Asia. No one believed it at the time except a few people—Mary the Mother; the Wise Men and the Shepherds, and an old Temple priest named Simeon. But as the boy grew up the great mystery of what happened on the first Christmas night became clearer; and when at last He was crucified for daring to say that He was God, and when He came back after death, many more believed in Him; and now what began on Christmas night is known to be the greatest wonder of all time. Poets and painters, singers and saints have all tried to describe the glory of Christmas—this good news that Christ comes as God to live among men.

CHRISTMAS tells the world that Love is far more powerful than anything man has created, mightier than his mightiest idea.

Husbanding Our Dollars

MR DALTON, Chancellor of the Exchequer, spoke recently of the important part British agriculture can play in these times in helping to eke out our supply of dollars by producing more food, so that we do not have to import so much from the dollar countries, as he called them.

A large part of our imported food comes from these dollar countries and, as they cannot, because of their high tariffs, take an equivalent amount of manu-

factured goods from us in exchange for that food, we have to pay for it in dollars. But we need our dollars to buy important raw materials and machinery for our industries. So every extra ton of food produced on our farms means more dollars in Britain's purse for her to buy articles vitally necessary for building up her industry.

As during the war, so now, Britain calls on her farmers to see her through difficult times—and knows the call will not be in vain.

Christmas makes it clear to the world that God Himself is Love, and that if we want to know about God we must turn to the Babe born in Bethlehem. What happened at Bethlehem on Christmas night changed the course of history. A whole stream of new ideas then began. The idea that all men are brothers whatever their race or origin was born at Bethlehem; and so was the belief in Peace on Earth.

BETHELEHEM's ideas and hopes, it is true, have not all been fulfilled. But many have. Our care for children is more tender and considerate because of the Child in that Bethlehem manger. Our regard for families and their homes is deeper because He started life without a home. We value the worth of human life more because Christmas shows us how much God Himself values it. We believe in the powers of Love and Truth and Beauty and Goodness because the Babe in the Bethlehem manger reveals them to us.

THE true wonder of Christmas is that it is a miracle which goes on being repeated, bringing fresh cheer and hope to a weary world. It says again in the loveliest way that God dwells among men and His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and that the best is yet to be!

Under the Editor's Table

PETER PUCK
WANTS
TO KNOW

If Santa Claus
is a
Christmas party

THE driver of a train should always be on his guard. Rough on the guard.

IN future bread may be delivered by plane. One way of making it rise.

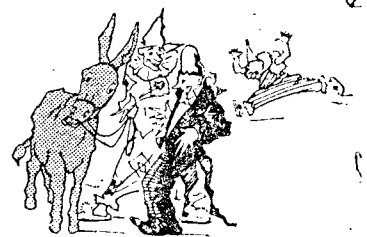
BISCUITS are short. They never last long.

A LADY says the shops in her district haven't the right shoes. Only left ones?



Frolics At

All clowns delight in playing tricks on people, and Clown Twistem was particularly full of mischief. While riding a donkey he saw simple Augustus standing by himself and, galloping up to him, offered him a ride on Neddy. "Riding a donkey," he said, "is the easiest thing."



Augustus had never ridden a donkey before and he began to wonder which was the right way to get on to Neddy's back. "Let me give your foot a hand," smiled Twistem, winking at the others. "That's handsome of you, Twistem," chuckled one of the other clowns, "that'll make Augustus a handy man."



They rushed round to Augustus. "Dear me, that's no way to mount a donkey," said Twistem, hiding his grins. "My hand's not a springboard, you know. I thought you were trying to jump out of the tent!" Carefully they placed him on Neddy's back. "Now, just sit back; Neddy will do the rest," said Twistem.



"Whoa! Stop! Where do I find the brake?" yelled Augustus as the donkey galloped faster than ever, while the clowns turned somersaults and cartwheels with mirth. Then Mr Loyal, the ringmaster, came on the scene and soon put a stop to their practical joking. "Go back to the stable, all of you!" he shouted angrily.



the Circus



Augustus was full of admiration for the cute way Neddy shook his head at him, and he thought, too, what a kind man Twistem was to offer him a pleasant donkey ride. The other clowns came running over to the pair.



But Twistem was altogether too handy with Augustus's foot. He shot it up with such force that the would-be donkey rider sailed completely over Neddy's back and landed head first on the ground on the other side. Neddy looked at him doubtfully.



"Oh wait a minute," cried Twistem. "There's a cheeky fly on Neddy's back just behind you. I must swat it, for Neddy hates giving rides to flies." With merry chortles, all the clowns swatted the imaginary fly, smacking the donkey's back smartly so that he galloped off.



At the word "stable" Neddy remembered that it was past his breakfast time and, braying eagerly, he turned so sharply that Augustus nearly went straight on—without Neddy. However, he managed to cling to Neddy's neck to the stable, where he made a not very graceful landing in the hay.



THE LOVELIEST TIME

CHRISTMAS DAY

WITHIN the hall are song and laughter. The cheeks of Christmas glow red and jolly, And sprouting is every corbel and With lightsome green of ivy and holly. *James Russell Lowell*

When He Was a Child

It is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child Himself.

Charles Dickens

God Rest Ye!

GOD rest ye, little children; let nothing you affright, For Jesus Christ, your Saviour, was born this happy night; Along the hills of Galilee the white flocks sleeping lay, When Christ, the Child of Nazareth, was born on Christmas Day.

Mrs Craik

GOD rest you merry, gentlemen, Let nothing you dismay, For Jesus Christ our Saviour Was born upon this day, To save us all from Satan's power. When we were gone astray. O tidings of comfort and joy, For Jesus Christ our Saviour Was born on Christmas Day.

Old English Carol

O BETHLEHEM!

OLITTLE TOWN of Bethlehem! How still we see thee lie; Above thy deep and dreamless sleep, The silent stars go by. Yet, in thy dark street shineth The everlasting Light; The hopes and fears of all the years, Are met in thee, tonight.

Phillips Brooks

Time of Kindliness

I HAVE always thought of Christmastime, when it has come round—apart from the veneration due to its sacred name and origin, if anything belonging to it can be apart from that—as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time; the only time I know of in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they were really fellow passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys.

Charles Dickens

Hallowed and Gracious

SOME say that ever against that season comes Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrate The bird of dawning singeth all night long; And then, they say, no spirit walks abroad: The nights are wholesome, then no planets strike, No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm, So hallowed and so gracious is the time.

Shakespeare

Tidings of Great Joy

AND it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is to come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.

And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

St Luke

CENTURIES AGO

It is the calm and solemn night! A thousand bells ring out and throw Their joyous peals abroad, and smite

The darkness, charmed and holy now! The night that erst no name had To it a happy name is given; For in that stable lay new-born, The peaceful Prince of Earth and Heaven,

In the solemn midnight Centuries ago! *Alfred Domett*

Oldtime Christmas Weather Forecasts

If the robin sings in the bush, Then the weather will be coarse. If the robin sings on the barn, Then the weather will be warm.

A warm Christmas foretells a cold Easter; a green Christmas a white Easter.

The nearer the new moon to Christmas Day, the harder the winter weather.

If the sun shines through the apple trees on Christmas Day, there will be an abundant crop the following year.

Under the Holly

YE who have nourished sadness, Estranged from hope and gladness, In this fast-fading year; Ye with o'erburthened mind, Made aliens from your kind, Come gather here.

Let not the useless sorrow Pursue you night and morrow; If e'er you hoped, hope now— Take heart, uncloud your faces, And join in our embraces Under the holly bough.

Charles Mackay

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

I WILL honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year.

Charles Dickens

Pantomimes Are Here Again

HE that says he does not like a pantomime either says what he does not think or is not so wise as he fancies himself. He should grow young again and get wisdom." So says Leigh Hunt in his delightful essay on Pantomimes; and all of us who are young, or have grown young again, echo his sentiments.

The season of pantomime is again upon us, bringing with it all its happy associations with Christmas holidays and jollity. To most of us Christmas holidays would be strangely incomplete if we did not again meet Cinderella

figures of Pantaloon and Harlequin and dainty Columbine. These were introduced into France and later came to this country.

In the meantime, a new kind of entertainment, the Court Masque, so beloved of the Tudors, had been growing popular in England. Masques, which combined drama, song, and dance, were often very elaborate, such as the one Leicester presented before Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth Castle which is described so vividly by Sir Walter Scott. Even the austere Milton wrote Comus, a beautiful masque which was set to music by Henry Lawes and performed before the Earl of Bridgewater at Ludlow Castle as late as 1634.

Another thread in the complicated pattern of pantomime was supplied by the French "vaudeville" entertainment, a mixture of light opera varied with dialogue and dance, which was imported into England during the eighteenth century. John Rich produced splendid pantomimes at Lincoln's Inn Fields and Covent Garden, which firmly established pantomime in the hearts of the British public.

The Clown's Entrance

It only remained for that indispensable person, the Clown, to make his entrance. At first he was an unimportant character who helped Harlequin and Pantaloon in their fogging, and it was Joseph Grimaldi, prince of clowns, who, with his quips and pranks, first captured and held the full glare of the footlights for him. Grimaldi it was who, amusing his audiences to their hearts delight early in the nineteenth century, won that place in public affection for the popular, red-nosed comedian who is the chief stage clown of today.

Pantomimes, year by year, grow more and more elaborate. But they still need their clown or funny man—call him what you will, Widow Twankey or Ugly Sister. Who can imagine a pantomime without him?



The famous clown, Grimaldi

or Mother Goose or Aladdin with his wonderful lamp.

Pantomime is a peculiarly British institution; there is no other form of entertainment quite like it. But when Leigh Hunt wrote of it he had something in mind very different from our present-day mixture of musical comedy, variety show, and fairy tale. Pantomime, in fact, has a long and varied history, going back to the days of Ancient Rome.

In the first century the notorious Nero was fond of watching, and sometimes taking part in, a form of entertainment in which the actor, known as the "pantomimus," did not speak but confined himself to gestures, mimicry, and dancing. To make sure that the audience would understand this form of dumb-show the subject of the play was always a well-known myth or legend which everyone could easily follow.

The next great step in the development of pantomime was the rise of the opera in Italy during the sixteenth century, with its



THIS ENGLAND

Winter sunshine in the lovely Surrey village of Shere

THE STORY OF KING STAG

Young Vic's First Play

The King Stag, a fairy-tale by the 18th-century Italian dramatist Carlo Gozzi, is to be the first play performed by the Young Vic Company. Founded by the famous Old Vic of London, this new theatrical company will devote itself especially to plays which appeal to young people, and it will open on Boxing Day at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith.

Here is the story of The King Stag.

A KING was given two magic spells by a great magician; one was a bust which would laugh whenever anyone told a lie in its presence, and the other was a spell, the speaker of which could transport his spirit into a dead creature.

The King wanted to choose a wife, so he used the bust to find out whether applicants were truthful. There is much fun as one woman after another, anxious to become Queen, tells lies to the King. At last Angela, daughter of his Second Minister, passes the test, and to show his faith in her the King smashes the bust.

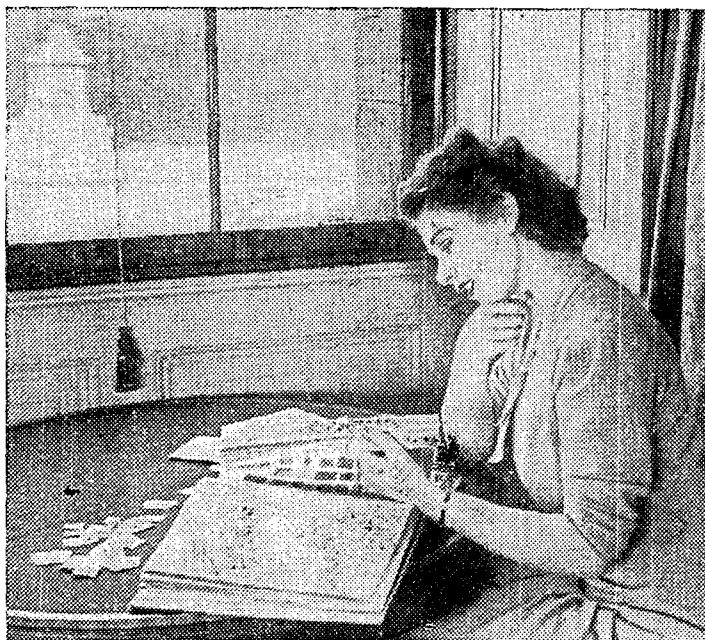
But his Prime Minister wanted his own daughter selected and also wanted to marry Angela himself. So on a hunting expedition he persuades the King, "just as an experiment," to repeat his magic spell over a dead stag. The King agrees, and thus his spirit enters the stag's body, which comes to life, and the Prime Minister, having overheard the spell, forthwith uses it to leave his own body and enter that of the King, which is, of course, untenanted. Then, as king, he tries to kill the King Stag, but His True Majesty escapes into the forest. In pursuing the King Stag the Prime Minister accidentally kills an old peasant, and into the peasant's body, when the hunters have

departed, the King, by repeating the magic spell, enters. Then as a peasant he sets off for the palace.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister, in the King's body, has returned to the palace, but Angela realises that this is not the man to whom she is betrothed. The peasant arrives, and, finding Angela alone, is able to persuade her that he is the King, and they plan to overcome the Prime Minister.

In the third and last Act the villain reappears and tells Angela she must come to church and marry him at once. The old peasant intervenes, the Prime Minister draws his sword to kill him, and then in a dramatic climax, the great magician, who has had himself brought into the palace as a parrot in a cage, turns himself back into a magician, produces thunder, lightning, and music, and transforms the King back into himself again and the wicked Prime Minister into a hideous old man.

It is a lively, humorous play, which will certainly appeal to young people—and to many grown-ups, too. The Young Vic Company will tour the provinces with it for six months early next year. Among the places to be visited are Reading, Cambridge, Hastings, Hanley, Kidderminster, Bristol, Bath, Cardiff, Cheltenham, and Oxford.



The Princess and Her Stamps

At a window of Buckingham Palace Princess Elizabeth studies her stamp collection. Below are reproduced two examples of the South African postage stamps to commemorate the Royal visit. Each value is issued in both English and Afrikaans.



TAKING A CENSUS AT THE ZOO

By Our Own Correspondent

IF during a visit to the Zoo this week, you should chance to see a keeper standing by a paddock fence apparently trying to count the animals inside, do not jump to the conclusion that an escape is suspected. The probability is that the man will only be counting his charges in preparation for the great annual census of the menagerie, which occurs officially on December 31.

Last year's count showed that there were 1849 animals in residence. This year a very different state of affairs prevails. Many hundreds of new animals have reached the Gardens, and the keepers, in not a few cases, will find their job of counting quite difficult. Here and there, no doubt, several recounts will be needed before the men satisfy themselves that they have the correct total, which, of course, is wanted for stocktaking purposes.

The chief problems are likely to occur at the Reptile House, which has recently received so many new exhibits that numbers are up to, if they do not actually exceed, those before the war.

To enumerate the edible frogs, for example, will take a little time. They live in a large den carpeted with fresh green turf, and tone almost exactly with the grass, so that it requires a keen eye to spot them all. The frogs themselves complicate matters, too, for they have a way of hiding themselves beneath rocks and ledges, and it is the easiest thing in the world to overlook one.

Another hard case will be the slowworms. There are thought to be about 30, and they, too, hide themselves cunningly away among turf and undergrowth.

Among the smaller mammals,

some of the trickiest creatures to enumerate are the voles. These active little rodents also inhabit a cage partly carpeted with turf, and when they hear the keeper opening their door they all scuttle away down their burrows, lying low until they realise they have been spotted, when they dash out and change places with a companion.

The keepers at Whipsnade, too, will be similarly engaged, and, in some respects, will have an even more complicated task. At Whipsnade the census always takes longer to complete, and although officially taken on the final day of the year, in reality occupies several weeks. This is because the zoo-park covers 500 acres (against the 34 at Regent's Park); and, because many animals, such as the smaller deer and the wallabies and covies, are free to roam the estate at will, and sometimes stray into the most isolated corners, the count becomes at times almost a hunt.

One of the most difficult jobs at Whipsnade will be to find out exactly how many reptiles there are on the large outdoor reptiliary, because at this season many snakes and lizards will be hiding away beneath rocks or in burrows, some of them hibernating. Only an experienced keeper who knows all the chief hiding-places can assess their numbers with any degree of accuracy.

A year ago the number of animals in the Bedfordshire zoo-park was 824. The count now taking place will reveal a substantial increase, partly because many new animals have arrived, partly because scores of new babies have come along. C. H.

The Earth at Her Nearest to the Sun

By the C N Astronomer

ON Thursday next, January 2, our world will be at its nearest point to the Sun—91,300,000 miles away; as the distance was 94,500,000 miles on July 3, we see how very much nearer we are to the Sun now. One effect is to make the Sun appear slightly larger, his apparent diameter now being about $32\frac{1}{2}$ minutes-of-arc as compared with $31\frac{1}{2}$ when the Earth was in *aphelion*, or at her farthest point from the Sun last July.

We may not notice the difference, and may think it matters little, but its effect upon the Earth is very appreciable. One result is that it shortens our Winter in the Northern Hemisphere by making this "half" of the year consist of only 179 days as compared with 186 days in the Summer "half"—that is from Equinox to Equinox, or from March 21 to September 23. This comes about because the Earth travels faster when she is nearer the Sun and so sprints over this half of her orbit more quickly.

The Colder South

In the Southern Hemisphere, of course, it is the Summer "half" that is the shorter, the Sun being farthest away when it is Winter there, so on the whole that hemisphere is the colder. Visual evidence of this is the very much larger glacial and permanent snowcap which covers Antarctica as compared with that of the Northern Hemisphere—and this notwithstanding the warming effects of the vast ocean areas on the Southern Hemisphere which retain more of the Summer's warmth. If, therefore, we in this hemisphere were *farthest* from the Sun in Winter, instead of in Summer, we should experience rigours that would make life very different from what it is.

The ice-cap which now covers Greenland would doubtless extend to Scotland, which would certainly be permanently united with Norway by ice, as in glacial times long ago. We might even sleigh from London to Newfoundland and Montreal in Winter; in fact, all the three continents of Europe, Asia, and America would be permanently united by ice.

We thus see what a lot of beneficial effects result from being some 3,000,000 miles nearer the Sun at this time—a fact which helps to counteract the disadvantage of the Earth's Axis being at this time tilted away from the Sun. G. F. M.

A Boy Saves His Sheep

THIS splendid example of a shepherd boy's devotion to duty comes from Campbelltown, Argyllshire. Thomas Mitchell, aged 17, placed in charge of 12 sheep, noticed as he stood on the mainland that they had strayed on to some dangerous rocks and would be cut off by the tide and drowned unless quickly rounded up. He could not swim, but he seized a mare, and, clinging to its mane, plunged through heavy seas and, at last, utterly exhausted, rescued his flock by driving them to higher ground on an island.

BEDTIME CORNER

The Christmas Play

ARTHUR and his friends were secretly rehearsing a play in an old barn on the farm where he lived. They had been busy for weeks getting their play ready. It was the Nativity play about the birth of Jesus, and it was to be a surprise for the grown-ups at Arthur's house at Christmas.

They had the book of the play, and they had made their own costumes out of odds and ends. The boy taking the



part of a donkey in the stable had a costume of brown paper.

But this afternoon everything seemed to go wrong. The paper donkey-skin Ralph was wearing got torn.

"It doesn't look like a real donkey at all," said Arthur despairingly, "and we can't seem to find any way of making the Wise Men's beards stick on properly."

"Let's give it all up," said Ralph hopelessly. "It's no use if we haven't got the right costumes."

Then they all jumped, as a voice from the door said:

"Don't give up. You all spoke your parts splendidly."

"It's the Vicar," whispered Arthur.

"I happened to be passing and watched you rehearsing," said the Vicar. "I can get you the right costumes. Would you like to act the play at the Village Hall next Saturday?"

They looked at each other and gasped, for they had only intended acting before a few of their parents.

The Vicar persuaded them to go on rehearsing, and next day Arthur brought the costumes from the Vicarage. They were enchanted with them, but as Saturday approached they couldn't help feeling nervous!

However, their play was a wonderful success and they were invited to perform it at the Manor House on Christmas Eve.

A Merry Christmas

At Christmas more than at any other of the great Christian festivals have the ancient customs of the church intermingled with those of a less sacred nature. The midnight pealing of bells on Christmas Eve, so often pictured on Christmas cards, is a reminder of the pre-Reformation custom of ushering in the festival by the celebration of Holy Communion—a custom that is still continued in many of our churches.

CHRISTMAS during the Middle Ages was known as the Festival of Light, for then the churches throughout the land would be a blaze of light from scores of candles massed on the altar and about the nave and chancel. The Chinese lanterns and fairy lights in our homes are really a survival of this ancient custom.

LONG before family parties became customary each church would have its feast on Christmas Day, usually in the church itself, and in those days of plenty our ancestors made merry in the true spirit of the family of the parish. Even the wild birds were not forgotten, for in many a village, in Ackworth, Yorkshire, for example, a

sheaf of wheat would be hung up outside the church for them.

IN Durham, the Yule Dough long survived. This was a little figure in paste which represented the Child Jesus and was given by bakers to their customers in the same manner as the chandlers gave Christmas Candles.

The Yule Log, whether ceremoniously burned in the baron's hall or the cottager's hearth, was another Christmas institution. The Yule Log was always lit from a faggot kept from the previous Christmas.

*With the last year's brand
Light the new block and
For good success . . .*

The brand annually plucked from the burning was believed to possess the virtue of warding off accidents due to fire during the coming twelve months.

THE decoration of our churches and homes has long been a feature of the Christmas season and is probably a survival of the pre-Christian era in our history. Not only would the interior of the church be lavishly decorated with evergreens but also the



tower and the surrounding streets. These decorations were allowed to remain for a considerable time after Christmas, and this practice led to a serious fire at old St Paul's when the evergreens on the wooden steeple caught alight during a freak thunderstorm on February 1, 1444.

THE Christmas tree, now so popular in our homes and, indeed, in churches such as St Martin in the Fields, London, and on the steps outside St Paul's Cathedral, is a fairly

modern innovation, being introduced to this country by the Prince Consort about a century ago.

FINALLY there was one old custom which has now died out. At one time every bishop and nobleman would appoint from his household an official known as the Lord of Misrule, who was responsible for organising all the festivities in the house during the Christmas season, which in those days extended from All Hallows Eve (October

31) to Candlemas (February 2). The Lord of Misrule arranged the feasts, dancing, games, masques, mummers, waits, and carol singers.

ALTHOUGH he has now long ceased to exist, many of the functions over which the Lord of Misrule presided still remain, and perhaps we can best remember him and the spirit of the old-time Christmas when we hear young voices sing the ancient salutation, "God rest you merry, gentlemen."

A CHRISTMAS CAROL—The Great Story by Charles Dickens, Told in Pictures



"I am the ghost of Christmas Present," said the Second ghost to visit Scrooge. This jovial ghost took Scrooge to see how people would celebrate Christmas. Scrooge stood invisible in the humble dwelling of Bob Cratchit, his underpaid clerk.



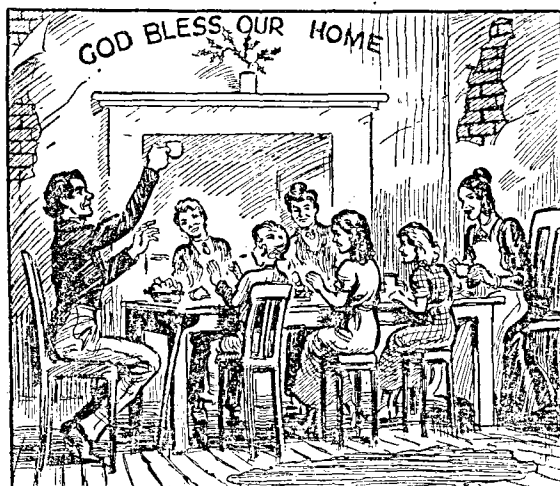
Mrs Cratchit and several young Cratchits, poorly dressed but cheerful, were eagerly awaiting father. A goose—rare treat indeed—was sizzling in the oven. There were shouts of joy when Bob in his threadbare suit arrived, carrying Tiny Tim, his little lame son, on his shoulder. They had been to church.



Two young Cratchits took Tiny Tim, who held a crutch and had his leg in an iron frame, to the wash-house outside to hear the Christmas pudding singing in the boiler. Scrooge watched Tiny Tim, and pity, for the first time for many years, entered his breast.



"Spirit!" he said. "Tell me if Tiny Tim will live." "I see a vacant seat in the poor chimney corner," and a crutch without an owner. If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, the child will die." Scrooge was overcome with penitence and grief.



Scrooge and the ghost then saw the Cratchits at dinner. Generous Bob suggested they might drink the health of Mr Scrooge. His wife retorted: "It should be Christmas Day when one drinks the health of such an odious, stingy, hard, unfeeling man as Mr Scrooge. You know he is, Robert! Nobody knows it better than you, poor fellow!"



The ghost then whirled Scrooge to his nephew's house where, invisible, they watched a jolly party playing a guessing game. After the guests had found that the nephew was thinking of a rather disagreeable animal, a lady exclaimed: "I know! It's your Uncle Scro-o-o-oge!" and there were shrieks of laughter. "A Merry Christmas to the old man, whatever he is," said the nephew. "He wouldn't take it from me yesterday, but may he have it nevertheless."



Scrooge longed to respond, but the ghost took him to other scenes, showing him the Spirit of Good Will at work. Then it left him alone in a dark place and, remembering that a third ghost was to come, Scrooge saw a solemn phantom coming like mist along the ground towards him. More of Scrooge next week.



Sound teeth are among the most valuable possessions you can ensure for your child. Here is a way to make certain he keeps them clean and healthy: see that he brushes them with Phillips' Dental Magnesia twice a day.

Regular use of Phillips' Dental Magnesia, which is the one toothpaste containing ★ 'Milk of Magnesia', neutralizes harmful mouth acids and helps to keep teeth white and free from decay. Make sure your child's future includes that sparkling *Magnesia* smile!

1/3 and 2/2.

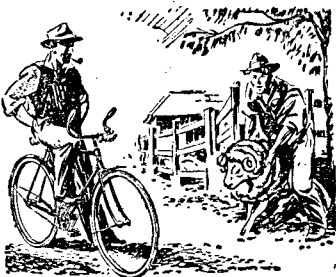
Phillips' Dental Magnesia

(Regd.)

★ "Milk of Magnesia" is the trade mark of Phillips' preparation of magnesia.

CYCLING

"DOWN-UNDER"



Many cyclists in Australia have a special style of their own—they ride with the handlebars reversed as illustrated here. The handlebars are easily adjustable to normal, but a favourite riding position is as shown in the picture. Hercules Cycles are as popular "down-under" as they are here at home, where you too can own a super-classy Hercules.

Hercules

*The Finest Bicycle
Built To-day*

THE HERCULES CYCLE & MOTOR CO.
LTD., ASTON, BIRMINGHAM

Genuine Ex-Railway and SHIP TARPULINS

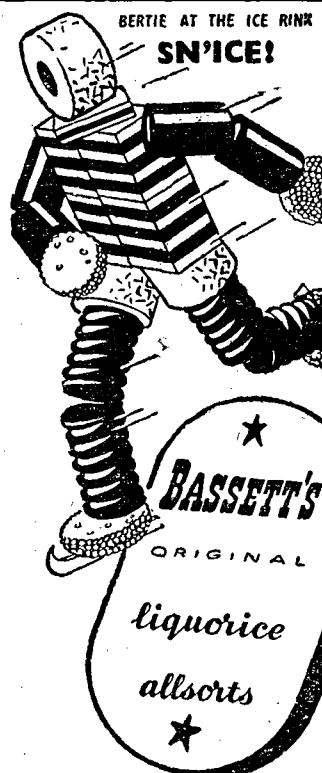
70 sq. ft. 20/-, incl. carr. Guaranteed Good Condition, worth 35/-; 2 for 39/-; 4 for 77/6. Extra large size, 280 sq. ft., £25; 140 sq. ft. £21/10/-; carr. free; 30 sq. ft. 6/-, carr. 2/-.

SHIPS' TARPULINS. Approx. 360 sq. ft. £26, incl. carr.; 720 sq. ft. £12, incl. carr.

EX-ARMY BELL TENTS Centre pole, all accessories. Thoroughly reconditioned. Sleeps 8. Height 9 ft. 6 ins., cir. 44 ft. £8/15/- complete.

MARQUEES 30 ft. x 20 ft. Height 14 ft. £38/15/- complete. Also larger sizes.

Ex-Government JACK KNIVES Slightly soiled. Price 3/9 each, post 6d.; 3 for 10/6, including post. HEADQUARTER & GENERAL SUPPLIES, LTD. (Dept. CN/T/3), Excel House, Excel Court, Whitcomb Street, Leicester Square, London, W.C.2.



The Long, Romantic Story of Tea

THE Ceylon Government recently announced their intention of departing from the wartime arrangements for the sale of Ceylon tea and of allowing a free market in tea as from January 1 next. They also intend to impose an export tax on all tea leaving Ceylon, in order to finance necessary imports of clothes, food, and so on into their country.

Since 1942 the British Ministry of Food has been the sole purchaser of tea for Britain and certain other countries, and the Ceylon Government's decision may give our Minister of Food another problem, for Ceylon, before the war, was the second biggest exporter of tea in the world, India being the biggest.

Thus it seems that another chapter in the long history of tea is about to open. A long story it is indeed for, according to the Chinese, tea was first discovered by man about 4680 years ago. The Chinese legend of its discovery is related by Mr Osbert Lancaster in his interesting little book, *The Story of Tea* (A Tea Centre Publication, 1s).

Who Discovered It?

In the year 2737 B.C.—runs the old tale—the Emperor Shennung, who believed in boiling his drinking water as a wise health precaution, was thus engaged when a few leaves from the burning branches on which his pot was a-boiling fell into the water, giving it a delicate and exquisite aroma.

The people of India, on the other hand, maintain that tea was discovered by a saintly Buddhist, Darma, early in the Christian era. Darma was devoting seven years of his life to sleepless contemplation of the Buddha and, becoming somewhat drowsy at the end of five years, he plucked a few leaves from a nearby bush and chewed them. They were tea leaves and wonderfully refreshed him.

Whoever may have discovered the beverage of which today more than 300,000 million cups are drunk every year throughout the world, the fact is that the earliest written reference to tea was made in a scholarly Chinese work of the 4th century of our era. In Europe its first written description was in a volume of travels published in Venice in 1559. It was not mentioned in an English book until 1598.

A Cure For All Ills!

The first tea ever to reach Europe was probably brought to Holland in 1610, but it was not until 1657 that a London coffee house proprietor began to advertise tea as a cure for almost every ailment. In 1660 the redoubtable Samuel Pepys recorded in his diary his first cup of tea. In 1680 there was the first record of anyone drinking tea with milk, Madame de la Sablière, in France.

By the 18th century tea had become popular with all classes in England, though there were some, John Wesley among them, who condemned it as a demoralising habit. Yet the great evangelist left behind him a teapot inscribed with a text.

The Duke of Wellington and Gladstone were large-scale tea-drinkers. Mr Gladstone is said to have filled his hot-water bottle with boiling tea so that it would not only warm his feet in bed but

provide him a "nice cupper" in the night if he felt so inclined.

We British are the greatest tea-drinkers in the world, consuming, in normal times, about 9½ lbs per head every year as against only ¾ lb drunk by Americans. Next to us come our Irish neighbours with 7½ lbs per head, then Australians with 7 lbs and next the New Zealanders with 6½ lbs. The tea-drinking customs of the countries served by airliners of BOAC are now being shown in beautiful dioramas at the Tea Centre, 22 Regent Street, London.

The gentle tea plant flourishes more and more, bringing harmless cheer and comfort to countless millions.

In Custody



This young tawny owl was picked up in an exhausted condition in the middle of a City of London street by a policeman, and is now being cared for in Pets Corner at the Zoo.

HOCKEY NEWS

IT is good news that women's hockey is practically restored to its pre-war standard, and that from next Monday, December 30, 45 county teams and 500 women players will be engaged in tournaments.

The tournaments, which will last for a week, are mainly on a territorial basis, Eastern county teams playing at Clacton, Southern county teams at Folkestone, Western teams at Weston-super-Mare, Northern teams at Blackpool; but the Midland teams will go south to Ramsgate, where the hockey pitches are in good condition. In addition to the county teams there will be two visiting sides from Scotland, one playing at Clacton and the other at Weston-super-Mare.

The five winning territorial teams will meet one another in a series of matches during the first fortnight in February. From these matches, no doubt, will be chosen the English team for the hockey matches against Ireland, at the Oval on March 1, and Wales, at Old Trafford, Manchester, a week later.

WHERE STUDENTS MEET

A House With a Wonderful History

STUDENT Movement House in Gower Street, London, a club for students of all nations, is appealing for £150,000 for new and enlarged premises which it hopes to acquire in the next five years, and for an endowment fund.

Student Movement House has had a wonderful history. Founded in 1917 as a memorial to British students who fell in the war, its noble purpose is to promote international friendship by enabling students of different nations in London to get together. The only qualification for membership is to belong to any university in the world.

One Big Family

Before the war young men and women who came from many different countries to study at the various colleges of London University used to forgather at Student Movement House for friendly talk—and sometimes argument—for games or rest and study, and, of course, for meals. In the difficult years immediately before the war students on different sides politically would meet on equal terms here; a Jewish refugee from Germany with a German Nazi student, a Japanese with a Chinese or Korean, the son of a Tsarist Russian exile with an ardent Communist; but under the tactful guidance of the warden, Miss Mary Trevelyan, who has held that position since 1931, they would all remember that here they were all one big family under one roof.

During the recent war Student House remained open even during the blitz, but there were few students in London then. Now the old times have come back and the membership is greater than ever—nearly 17,000 from 60 different countries.

Mr Bevin, the Foreign Secretary, sent his good wishes for the success of the appeal when it was launched recently.

A Rare Visitor

LARGE numbers of waxwings, beautifully-coloured birds from the North of Europe that rarely visit Britain, have been seen recently as far south as Sussex.

The waxwing is remarkable for curious appendages, like drops of red sealing-wax, at the ends of some of its wing feathers. It has a silky, chestnut-coloured crest, which it raises when alarmed, and a broad yellow band on its tail.



Waxwings, though they come from the wild forests of the North, are not shy, and scores of the brightly-plumaged visitors were seen perched on bushes in a garden in the centre of the town of Fort William. They are silent birds, uttering only a low, plaintive whistle which gives them their Finnish name of Tilhi.

Their irregular visits to Britain gave rise to an old legend that their appearance was an omen of war, death, or disaster.

A NEW MAP OF OLD ENGLAND

Medieval Wessex

SIXTH-FORM schoolchildren and their history teachers are to help with the field work required for a map of Wessex in the 14th century, which is to be prepared by a small team of experts at University College, Southampton.

Although we know much about the past, we have no map of England in the Middle Ages based on modern scholarship, and this new map of Wessex will be "sheet one" of a national map containing thousands of facts about the political, social, economic, and religious life of England between the years 1300 and 1350—the medieval period best represented in our old manuscripts and documents.

A Welsh Example

The idea is to do for Wessex (which, roughly speaking, is Hampshire, Wiltshire, and Dorset) what Professor William Rees of Cardiff has already done in his map of South Wales and the Border in the 14th century. Single-handed he worked on it for 20 years. Professor Rees tells how he "lived" with his map during all those years, and how Mrs Rees grew rather tired because of all the space it occupied in their Cardiff home.

Professor Rees is, of course, one of the greatest living authorities on this sort of map-making, and the Southampton committee were delighted when he consented to help them. Other research workers who will help to reconstruct the Wessex of medieval times are Professor Rothwell, a Scotsman who teaches at Southampton, Dr R. Pelham, an expert on historical geography, and Mr O. G. S. Crawford, the famous archaeologist.

But the professors, clever as they are, could never by themselves do all the work necessary for the preparation of this map. They are depending upon hundreds of amateur field workers, including many boys and girls.

The Mayoress



The C.N. recently referred to the 14-year-old Mayoress of Stafford as the youngest in the country, but here is a picture of 13-year-old Jean Owen, Mayoress of Bexley, Kent, in school.

Is the Earth Growing Warmer?

AN attempt is to be made to collect records of snowfall in Britain. It should be begun this winter in Scotland, and its purpose is to find whether over a number of years the falls of snow are lessening in frequency or in quantity.

Unlike rainfall, which is measured throughout the year by some 5000 observers, the measurements of snow are extremely scanty. In Aberdeen snow falls on 34 days in the year, and in Shetland on 22, as against, for example, 96 days in Newfoundland; and that is nearly all the collectors have to tell.

The reason why more information is sought is because it may throw light on the question of whether the earth is growing warmer.

One of the reasons for this supposition is that the glaciers in the northern part of the globe are retreating. In the second half of the 19th century they aroused attention to this fact by methodically retreating in Switzerland. So also they are now retreating in Canada and in Argentina, and it is surmised that there has been a general retreat of glaciers in the past hundred years throughout Spitsbergen, Iceland, Central Asia, and Alaska. We may presently learn whether the Antarctic glaciers support the idea that the rise of temperature is taking place all over the globe.

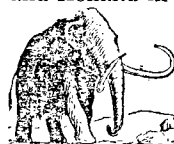
It seems that the earth has not yet got out of the last Ice Age, which is going but has not yet gone.

An Ice Age is not a period of unbroken severity. It is like an irrelative guest who stops in the doorway to say goodbye two or three times before taking himself off. That was the way of the last great one, the Quaternary Ice Age, which spread its icy coverlet over the British Isles as far south

as Finchley before it melted. It has left the marks of its retreats and its renewals in Russia, where Russian and Swedish geologists have succeeded in tracing them. Their charts show the advances of the Ice Cap, each of which was followed by an interglacial period when, as now, there was warmth and rain with trees and ferns and flowers.

The cradle of that Ice Age was the Baltic, and from there it spread during the half-a-million years it lasted in all directions, northward into the Arctic Ocean, eastward and southward to the plains of Russia and Germany, and westward over the shallow North Sea to the margins of the Atlantic shelf, taking England and Holland in its stride. There were four pulses of invasion. The first rather indefinable advance was about half-a-million years ago; the second 425,000 years, and the third 225,000 years. The most recent is only 110,000 years old, but it made three attempts to get going.

The first of these attempts found Early Man in possession and already improving the flint implements of his forefathers. The mammoth was also with him; but it may have been in a later inter-glacial period that a mammoth fell down a break in the ice and froze so solidly that a few years ago it was found in the still frozen earth of the Beresovka River, in Siberia. It stands now, stuffed and mounted, in the museum at Leningrad.



A CALL TO YOUNG ARTISTS

YOUNG people are to be asked to help the Come to Britain movement by designing artistic posters to attract people in overseas countries to spend a holiday in our country.

A national poster-competition is being organised by the National Association of Girls' Clubs and Mixed Clubs, who are working with the British Travel Association and the Royal Society of Arts.

The prizes, all of which are offered by organisations belonging to the British Travel Association, are worth about £600. Many of the prizes are free holidays.

This is indeed a splendid opportunity for our young artists to help to develop Britain's tourist trade. For Lord Hacking recently estimated that next

year we may expect over 250,000 visitors, of whom about 60,000 may be from the United States. Assuming they spend on an average £100 each, we shall be better off by £25,000,000.

The poster competition is being arranged in three sections—for members of youth organisations, for students of art schools, and for pupils of day or boarding schools. Each section will be divided into two groups, one for competitors aged from 16 to 18, and the other for those from 19 to 20.

The imagination of British youth may be depended on to produce designs that will appeal to the world's citizens whom we wish to entertain here in what Arthur Mee fittingly called our Enchanted Land.

Once a Scot Always a Scot

DUNEDIN in New Zealand has never forgotten that its name is derived from the capital of Scotland. It is, in fact, the old Gaelic name for Edinburgh. Some time ago the "Edinburgh of the South" subscribed £1000 so that a memorial to itself should be established in the Scottish Edinburgh.

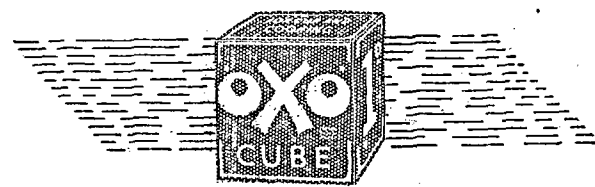
It is now being suggested that the money be used to decorate a

room in the Edinburgh City Chambers which would be called the Dunedin Room. Such a gesture from the other side of the world supports the tradition that Scots abroad always retain their affection for their native land however far they may be from it. That is probably the reason why there is a fine statue of Robert Burns in the centre of Dunedin.

What is it?



OXO'S THE ANSWER!



PREPARED FROM PRIME RICH BEEF

Unspoken words
reveal that



Sharps

THE
WORD
FOR

TOFFEE

EDWARD SHARP & SONS LTD. of Maidstone, Kent "THE TOFFEE SPECIALISTS"



Every dog must have his Chappie if he is to be the dog you'd like him to be—a healthy, cheerful bundle of friendliness. It makes all the difference if he has the

right food, and vets and breeders agree that Chappie is just what he needs to keep him fit—it's his meat diet balanced to the best advantage.

1/- a tin

"CHAPPIE" DOG FOOD



THE BRAN TUB

THE HELPING HAND

"So Raymond is spending Christmas in Switzerland—gone for his health, I understand."

"Oh, what did he have?"
"Just a nice fat cheque from his father!"

A Careless Shopkeeper

A SHOPKEEPER made out a bill for an amount in which there were no pence. Carelessly he put the number he intended for shillings as pounds, and the number he intended for pounds as shillings. Thus written the bill was for exactly double what it should have been. What amount did he write down and what amount had he intended to write?

Answer next week

BOARDING-OUT PUSSY

IF your pet is to be left with the vet over Christmas and you have no cat basket, put him in an old pillow-case and tie him firmly, but not too tightly, of course, round the neck.

Then you can safely carry him in your arms or in a well-ventilated box. Reassure him on the journey by letting him hear your voice and feel your hand.

Cats get very frightened on the move, but settle down again quickly enough afterwards.

Pithy Proverb

WALK slow—go far.

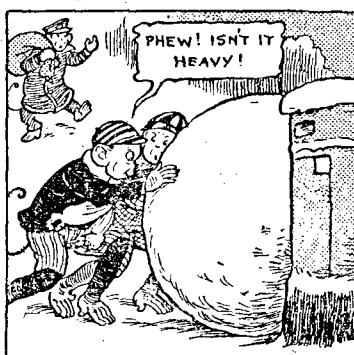


Lixen
THE GOOD-NATURED LAXATIVE
In bottles - - 2/3, 3/11
LIXEN LOZENGES
For the children. Fruit-flavoured, in bottles 1/8
From Chemists only.
It's an Allenburys Product
Made in England by Allen & Hanburys Ltd.

Jacko and Chimp Try to Post a Snowball



Just before Christmas Jacko and Chimp were making a big snowball.



They wondered why it suddenly became so hard to push.



They soon found out when the postman came to collect the Christmas mail.

HIDDEN CHARACTERS

Seven famous characters in the novels of Charles Dickens are hidden in the following verse.

WHILE Pan was piping in the fields,

Some girls went gaily for a spin.
Nan cycled smartly, well erect,
And Peg got typists to join in.
They stopped, and one a jonquil picked.

Much scrutiny time quite ruled out.

Twas queer so much was done and seen;

But they knew what they were about.

Answer next week

Proverbs About Pleasure

PLEASANT hours fly fast.

Fly that pleasure which paineth afterward.

Excess of delight palls the appetite.

IN FRIENDSHIP'S NAME

HOUSEMASTER, preparing a lecture on the Far East: "I think there is a custom in China of breaking china to cement friendship."

Wife: "Then, dear, the new school 'general' must be a bosom friend of the Head's family."

Other Worlds

IN the evening Saturn is in the east and Uranus is in the south-east. In the morning Venus and Jupiter are in the south-east. The picture shows the Moon as it may be seen at eight o'clock on the evening of Saturday, December 28.



Catch Question

WHAT did his son say when William Tell shot the apple?

I that was an arrow escape

The Children's Hour

BBC programmes from Wednesday, December 25, to Tuesday, December 31.

WEDNESDAY, 5.0 Children to Children—how children celebrate Christmas in many European capitals, from recordings made by Uncle Mac. North, 5.0 Join the Brydon Family in Christmas Day at St Jonathan's.

THURSDAY, 5.0 Christmas Crackers—a Boxing Day programme, including a Pantomime, special Christmas story about Mr Murphy and Timothy John, and songs and carols by Everton Public Elementary School Choir.

FRIDAY, 5.0 A Christmas story; Young Artists, 5.40 Pigeon Post (No 13). North, 5.0 Christmas Quiz between teams of children in Belfast and Manchester; Nature Diary.

Tongue Twister

FATHER CHRISTMAS would rather ride the rich rajah's racy reindeer with regal red reins wrapt round their rural necks.

RODDY



"Can I have two with sweet coupons in them, please!"

Seasonable Riddles

WHY is the Christmas pig a contradiction? Because it is first killed then cured.

What did the sailor "hawk"? "Turkey" carpets.

When does a Christmas visitor present you with a piece of holly? When he gives you a bow (bough) and leaves.

JUMBLED REGIMENTS

IF the letters of the following phrases are properly rearranged, they will spell the names of four famous regiments of the British Army.

NO AMERICANS
RUSH ASS
MOST CRADLES
A LIFE BRIDGER

Answer next week

A GAME WITH A CATCH

ASK the audience to name ten things associated with Christmas, the initials of which are all the same.

They will probably take a letter of the alphabet and try to think of Christmassy things beginning with it, but that is not the idea at all.

Then you take a piece of paper and write down, using a capital letter for each: Adoration, Lantern, Log, Tree, Holly, Evergreen, Shepherd, Angel, Manger, East.

"Those initials are not all the same," someone will protest; then pass the piece of paper round for them to see for themselves that the capitals spell ALL THE SAME.

If anyone guesses the catch, and uses alternative words like Angel for A, Mistletoe or Mincepie for M, and Star or Stocking for S, these would be allowed, of course.

Who Was He?

THE man in the picture-story on page 4 was William Wilberforce.

RANDOM SHOOTING

O, MANY a shaft at random sent, Finds marks the archer little meant!

And many a word at random spoken

May soothe or wound a heart that's broken!

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

Christmas Fare

Raisins; sugar; dates; salt; nuts; sultanas; lemon; fat.

H	E	A	P	H	A	S	H
A	D	D	R	E	S	S	E
R	I	T	E	R	A	S	E
E	T	H	E	R	E	N	D
I	O	N	A	N	T		
T	O	O	O	I	T	E	R
I	N	T	A	C	T	R	
L	E	N	T	I	C	E	S
L	A	R	D	C	E	D	E

Catastrophe

IF you drop the dish of roast turkey on Christmas Day, what international calamities will result?

The fall of Turkey, the overthrow of Greece, and the break-up of China.

Learn this simple

KERB DRILL

Teach it to the children—always do it yourself!



1 At the kerb
HALT

2 Eyes
RIGHT



3 Eyes
LEFT

4 Eyes
RIGHT AGAIN
then if the road is clear



5 **QUICK MARCH**
Don't rush
cross calmly



Keep Death off the Road

K3

Issued by the Ministry of Transport